

# **A River of Stars**

**Bart415**

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This story was first published on May 4th, 2023, and was last updated on May 4th, 2023.

FicLab ID: Lrlw8kcc/lqkp82pi/50000E5U

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# Summary

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**title** A River of Stars  
**author** Bart415  
**source** <https://www.fanfiction.net/s/14229362/>  
**published** May 4th, 2023  
**updated** May 4th, 2023  
**words** 4,402  
**chapters** 1  
**status** Complete  
**rating** Fiction T  
**tags** Comfort, Complete, Fanfiction, Final Fantasy IX, Games, Garnet A., Hurt, Spiritual

## Description:

Garnet reflects her woes as she wonders if Zidane will keep his promise to come back from the Iifa Tree. She sits alone in her study reflecting on her fear that he may not return yet she realizes that there is still hope that he may someday return.

# 1. A River of Stars

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## A River of Stars

*“As I write this tonight, the day were he has not come home....yet again. So many endless nights, endless worries, of not knowing when that day may finally arrive. I would be lying to myself saying everything will be alright.*

*The truth is... everything is not alright.*

*I miss hearing his reassurances that everything will be okay. His confidence in me, his smile, his gentle voice... his... confounding furred tail. Something about it just... I can't really say... the sight of it lets me know he is close by.*

*I find it hard to not think about him, knowing that he was there nearly with me at every moment I was traveling around Gaia. Once trying to save my mother then saving the planet from utter destruction.*

*That very first moment we laid eyes on each other... his carefree personality, his embarrassing seductions... gods they were such tease... yet... they were genuine to him.*

*Why is it so hard to keep my mind free of him... why?*

*Why is it that of all the people I met, why is it that I cannot stop thinking about him.*

*We're both from two very different worlds, many people would say it's not meant to be, many would say his place is not at my side. Many would say he is nothing more than a scoundrel.*

*Yet... he was more than a scoundrel; he was a person of genuine care. Genuine heart.*

*The night he first heard my sorrow in a small village outside the palace walls, he never stopped caring for me, even the first time we nearly had to go our separate ways. He came back for me and for the first time I saw in his eyes he was feeling the sorrow I am feeling that we may never see each other again.*

*The sorrow I saw that day... has come become my own sorrow now. Not knowing when that day may come where I may see him again. His smile as we parted ways, his confident smile.*

*When I asked of him... to promise me one thing and one thing only.*

*Please come back."*

"Your Majesty?"

"Huh?" Garnet looked up from her desk, her eyes wide open, palms feeling a slight hint of sweat in them holding her quill in her right hand, the candle near the corner of her desk with its flame dancing beside her. She quickly brushed her soft black long hair with her left hand and leaned up against her chair making sure she was presentable to her guest. Staring at the large double wooden doors across from where she sat.

"You may enter." She announced as the door to her study room opened as a maid entered the room; she closed the door behind her and approached the Queen's desk gently curtsying to her and smiled.

"I do apologize for the late intrusion Your Majesty, is this a bad time?" the maid asked.

The Queen shook her head.

"Not at all, please by all means, what did you need to present?" Garnet lowered her quill and held her hands together.

"Well Your Majesty, it's about the upcoming play; I do understand it's been quite some time since

your return from the Iifa Tree, I wish to go over some of the preparations you had asked for your special guests.”

Garnet felt a pinch sensation inside of her chest by the maid’s words.

“Oh... that’s right, I’m terribly sorry for not speaking with you about it.” Garnet gently bowed her head in apology.

“Oh Your Majesty there is no need for such apologies, I fully understand so much has changed since your return, I can only imagine such hardships you’ve must’ve endured having to be rushed onto the throne with Alexandria being rebuilt.” The maid gently waved her hand.

Garnet let out a weak smile.

“That’s very kind of you to say... I’ve been feeling overwhelmed by much of this, it... it’s been so very lonesome not really being able to see everyone as before.” She looked out the window near her desk to her right. Seeing the starlit night through the glass as with its clear skies clusters galore.

“Do you miss your friends?” The maid looked along.



Garnet nodded.

“I... I do...” The Queen said solemnly.

“Including... him?”

Garnet closed her eyes and felt the pinching sensation return.

“.....”

“If it’s a question you need not answer, I fully understand and apologize for asking.” The maid said.

Garnet opened her eyes slowly and shook her head.

“It’s alright... I musn’t burden with my stories of him...”

“Your Majesty by all means tis no burden to the ears. I do enjoy all of your heart warming stories of your ventures with him.” The maid smiled as Garnet looked towards her.

“Oh... I... I didn’t know it meant well to you. I feel as if I’ve been only letting out steam from my woes of not being able to see him...”

The maid shook her head.

“Your Majesty, sometimes in life, the hardships we experience an outlet of some sort is quite desired for the heart to heal.”

Garnet looked to her small booklet on top of her green cloth covering a small portion of her large oak wood desk, writing each night her true feelings of her daily life as Alexandria’s new monarch. Helming the largest responsibility of her life as a young age not usual in its modern time. Every night her heart ached for wondering when Zidane would return to Alexandria as she had asked him before their separation at the Iifa Tree. The man who said he needed to stay behind to help those in need, including their once adversary.

Her time spend in Alexandria had much growing pains to bear, to healing her people to overcome the grief that was the destruction of the kingdom, from its long war driven months with Burmecia during Brahne’s ruling, to the passing of her own Step Mother and Father, and the potential idea that someone she cares for may not even return.

Garnet let out a sigh.

“I feel every night I worry he may not return.”

The maid nodded.

“A valid concern no doubt. Given all what you’ve both been through, it’s much to take in.”

“It is...” Garnet leaned further back into her chair. “I worry about him... it pains me to not know where he is and how well he may be. I find myself seeing him in all my novels that I read when the time permits. All the stories he told me about his ventures were as my novels came to life. He lived through each and one of them. The same way I lived mine in fruition. I cannot imagine ever seeing myself living that time again... I’ve so much to worry for now... yet... my mind cannot shake his presence out.”

The maid looked at the Queen’s massive bookshelf next to the study room’s window; endless amounts of novels from assortments of genres. Fictions, Fantasies, Dramas, Romance, the list goes on, the Queen dabbled endless times of grabbing a book from the shelf to be free from her current reality.

“Your own adventure was a fantasy of its own is it not Your Majesty?” The maid asked as she turned her attention to Garnet.

“Hmm... it felt like it was... yet part of me wish I would’ve said more to him when we separated...”

Garnet looked to her booklet, seeing her freshly written words of her own memoir, the black ink dried on the parchment paper.

“I can only imagine, he still sounds like quite a charmer.”

Garnet let out small chuckle, the maid raised an eyebrow with a smile.

“That’s the first time I’ve seen you smile in a long time Your Majesty.”

“Oh please I’ve smiled before; you’ve seen me in the public eye.” Garnet eased her tensed body against her chair.

“None were as genuine as this one.” The maid said as Garnet tilted her head slightly in confusion.

“What do you mean?”

“Well...”

The maid looked around the Queen’s study room, full of book shelves and large painting canvas, one behind her of the entire Alexandria area in full view with two large windows beside it, on the right of her desk another large painting of Lindblum in full view overlooking the mountain range near it, the desk on top of a large ruby colored rug with gold trims on

the edges. A generous size room but enough for Garnet to feel at peace when she wished to spend time by herself or with dignitaries visiting her kingdom.

“I know it’s not quite my place to speak of yet the time I’ve spent with you, I do notice that you at in a place a pain, one in of your own heart. To see you smile, I can see in your eyes the small sense of lonesomeness. One of missing one in particular that you wish to return.”

Garnet closed her eyes and felt her numbing fingers slowly pulling themselves apart. Her maid was not wrong, she did miss Zidane, the only one who did not visit her after returning to Alexandria from her victory over death itself. The last person who never came by to see how she was fairing in her newfound life.

“I... I see...” The Queen numbly said as she opened her eyes.

“Your Majesty if I may say, every time we speak together, I find it very heartwarming to hear how much this person has made an impact on your life.” The maid assured as Garnet felt surprised.

“What do you mean?”

“The man you speak of sounds like quite a valiant young fellow, every time you speak of him I can see how relieved you are speaking highly of what he has done for you. Those moments leave me to believe that this is one way to overcome this hardship of his absence. One that does wonders to the mind and the heart.”

“Hmm...” Garnet looked to her booklet and flipped the pages seeing her memoirs of each day speaking of Zidane. The more she glanced at her own words the more she began to understand her maid’s words.

“Tell me Your Majesty, what made you confide of this person to me if I may ask?”

Garnet looked up to her maid, the young woman with her hazelnut colored hair shoulder length hair with a few strands laying on her shoulder in her one piece blue dress with a white apron; nearly a year in after arriving to the palace, was assisting Garnet alongside with her primary maid with her day to day duties; whether it was prepping her for her meeting with her ministers, to the people of Alexandria, her relatives from Lindblum, her own friends and foreign dignitaries. The maid willingly listened to the stories of Garnet’s adventure with her friends.

The topic of Zidane sparked the maid's interest more as the more she heard of Zidane the more she could see how much Garnet missed his presence.

“To be... fairly honest...” Garnet looked to the maid's gentle eyes. “I remember when we first met you mentioned you were fairly new here, new to all the ways of the palace. I know you were simply asked to fill in for my maid since she has much to worry about currently. I felt as if we're almost similar to one another. New to the life one is not familiar with...”

The maid smiled.

“You're not wrong about it... I'm honored to be entrusted with such stories.”

Garnet smiled.

“I appreciate your compliment...”

“If I may ask Your Majesty....what is it about him that makes you miss his presence the most?”

“Hmm...”

Garnet stood up from her chair and walked towards the window to her right, the maid watched as Garnet stood in front of the window, laying her right hand against the glass looking. She looked

through the glass seeing Alexandria asleep into the night. Her reflection of herself visible gently against the window as the maid saw also.

“I miss... his words... his smile... his stories...”  
Garnet’s voice drifted away.

*“Once upon a time... there was a man. There was a man who didn’t know where he came from...”*

*Zidane?*

*This man had longed to find his birthplace ever since he was a small child. His birthplace. A place he only remembered in his dreams...*

*Why...?*

*He wanted to know more about himself, maybe. About his place, the house where he was born... One day, the man left the home of his adoptive father and went on a quest to find the answer. His only clue was the blue light he saw in his dreams...*

*A blue light?*

*Yeah. He thought it might be a memory of his birthplace. An ocean maybe...?*

*Did he find it?*



*Hey, you're jumping ahead. A lot of things happened along the way. Alright, we can skip ahead... No, he never found it. How could he? His only clue was a colored light. So he went back to the home of his adoptive father... What do you think his father did when he came home?*

*...Welcomed him home?*

*No way! The father raised his fist and beat the son he had worked so hard to raise... I don't know... But you know what surprised him even more? The father smiled, after beating up his son! Can you believe that? He just gave his son a beating. But this is what the man thought when he saw his father smile... This is my home. This is the place I call home. The man is still searching for his birthplace. But he already has a home. Maybe.....it's the same for Vivi. He's looking for a place to call home.*

*I wonder if Vivi will stay in the village?*

*Who knows... That's for him to decide."*

*"His care... for others." Garnet said.*

*The maid smiled as she walked towards the Queen, walking around the table and standing at her side looking out the window as well.*

“It’s beautiful tonight isn’t it?” The maid said as Garnet nodded.

“It is... I remember the first time I ever saw the stars like this, Dali was such a difference place compared to Alexandria. The maid nodded.

“The night he first heard your song, do you still wish he could hear your voice again?” The maid asked.

Garnet closed her eyes.

“I do... sometimes when I am in my chamber I sing it, hoping to see him walk through those doors to my chamber to tell me that he is alright, sometimes even here in this room, I sing from time to time hoping he will come through the doors saying he is alright.” Garnet opened her eyes looking to the clusters of stars above Alexandria, spotting one cluster that reminded her of the rivers sprawled across the Mist Continent.

“Hmmm Your Majesty I know this may seem out of the ordinary; has he ever told about the stars above us? How they can show us the path to our destiny?” The maid said as Garnet looked over to her.

“They do?” She asked.

“I remember so well when my parents spoke about them, they say the constellations can call upon you to guide you to the path you seek, a path of destiny as they say.”

Garnet was intrigued by the idea.

“Please do tell.”

The maid looked to Garnet with a smile.

“When one follows their heart, the stars align themselves to show us the path we seek, through much patience and sincerity.” The maid looked up to the clusters. “I recall one time being lost while in Lindblum, the airship left so quickly to venture into the Theatre district that I thought I would never find my parents.

Garnet let out a gasp.

“Oh goodness! That must’ve been a frightening experience.”

The maid nodded.

“It was... I was so young at the time, a mere child lost in a giant city. Every parent’s worst nightmare. It all happened so fast, the airship had many people going in and out of the cab, I lost my gripping on my mother’s hand and I found myself

drifting away from them as they were being pushed into the cab. The attendant couldn't hear my mother's cry while she was trying to push back against the massive crowd and locked the door so the airship could continue on its path."

"Oh goodness, I never really realized Lindblum was so bustling... I must be quite unaware of the norms that is Lindblum... since... I rarely had the time to venture into the city itself... I was always secluded to the castle more or less."

The maid smiled.

"It's quite alright, we come from different worlds, times were certainly different then."

"Did the attendant at least help you? I'm... surprised the people didn't realize you were separated from your mother."

"I was quite scared... before I knew it... I found myself outside the station not realizing where I was... it was dark out and everyone had already left. The worst part was it was the last cab of the night... I was nearly stranded and everyone had already left. I felt scared to go back inside the station thinking nobody would help me."

"Oh dear goodness... what did you do?"

The maid looked up to the cluster of stars.

“I remember what my mother said, I thought maybe she would find me with the help of the stars above... so... I looked for a safe place to wait... I found a bench near an artist’s home and sat there... waiting for her to find me.”

The maid looked back towards the Queen.

“Did you look up to the stars above that night?”

“I did. I was drawn by how many there were... even despite all the lights Lindblum had... I saw them clearly, something that is rare there.”

“Really?”

The maid nodded.

“Stars in Lindblum are hard to see since there’s so much light out in the city, unlike my home village... but that night... they seethed through them and a large cluster I saw seemed to circle above me as if it was telling me to stay where I was...”

Garnet looked up to the stars through the window, looking for patterns similar to her maid’s story, looking to see if they were lighting the way for Zidane to find his way home.

“Were they similar to what we’re seeing now?”

“Almost... I see the constellations there are not where they normally are.” The maid pointed out to a small cluster of stars. “Those ones over there, normally they are over Nolrich Heights, and... over there if you see those constellations they would be above King Ed Plains.

Garnet followed the maid’s fingers seeing the constellations she pointed out to, it never dawned on her the skies could change the on any given night. She was mesmerized by the maid’s knowledge of the stars above as she briefly explained the constellations normal placing in the skies. She had began to wonder herself if they would be changing their placement for Zidane.

“I don’t mean to disrupt your story... did... did you mother find you?”

The maid lowered her hand and looked to the Queen.

“She certainly did, it took nearly quite some time for her to reach me, she had traveled so far from the business district to find me, sitting calmly and glancing at the stars.” The maid smiled.

“Goodness, that’s such a travel...” the Queen gasped.

“She never lost hope that I would be found... more or less... when I was looking at the stars I felt calm... I was hopefully that I would be found. She certainly was quite fearful the worst would’ve happened.”

“Hmm... I’m sure if it were in Treno I’m sure the... circumstances would’ve been different...”

The maid shook her head.

“I wouldn’t have lost hope either.”

Garnet blinked in surprise.

“How so?”

The maid looked out to the stars.

“The flow of a river will always continue no matter how horrible its environment becomes, whether there be less water flow or much, it continues to flow regardless of what is in its path.” The maid said as placed her hands against the window. “The stars above us will always continue to light our night skies, even if the weather does not allow us to see them... yet they will always be there when we need something to help with our fears and

help bring hope for those who are finding their way home.”

Garnet gazed upon the stars, their flickering across the skies were like millions of candles dancing the night away. She studied their unique patterns across the sky looking for some sort of sign that Zidane is still alive and finding his way home. The Queen was never taught lessons of astronomy growing up, it was a rarely taught lesson in Alexandria given it was not known for airship travels compared to its Lindblum counterpart. The study of skies was more common to airship workers and captains who needed to know how to traverse the skies and know their direction.

Even on her rides on the Red Rose she remained in the cabin reading her novels to pass the time while many crewmen ran around the ship working the every gadget to keep it afloat and soaring in the right direction. She was not one for mechanics but more or less was more interested in the natural beauties that was Gaia when they would flow above the mist seeing parts of the mountain ranges that pierce the gray mist filled skies.

“I’m sure he is out there finding his way back Your Majesty.” The maid spoke as Garnet turned her



head towards the maid.

“You... believe so?” She responded as she brushed her hair with her right hand.

The maid looked back at the Queen with her calm blue eyes, it eased the Queen’s anxiety, her gentle smile and hazelnut colored hair near prominent in the Queen’s view.

“From all the stories you’ve told of him...” The maid looked out the window. “He is following the stars above to return to the place he’s been to someday. Maybe not tonight, maybe not tomorrow, but someday. He will return here to you.”

Garnet looked out the window with the maid and let out a relieving breath, her entire chest felt relief. Her arms felt relaxed, her legs no longer feeling a small tingling feeling of fear, and her palms no longer sweating.

“I...”

Garnet closed her eyes for a moment, she felt something different in that moment as if... someone else out there closed theirs at the exact moment as she did... she opened them seeing the river of stars above her.

“I hope someday... he may return... and I know deep in my heart... he would want me... to live. The same way he did no matter what happens.” Garnet smiled.

The maid smiled and the two looked to one another, Garnet nodded her head.

“Thank you for taking the time to listen to my stories.” Garnet said.

The maid let out gentle smile.

“The pleasure is all mine Your Majesty. Shall I leave you to write your memoirs?” The maid asked.

Garnet nodded.

“If you don’t mind and... thank you for your kind words, I feel much relieved now. I’m grateful that he taught me to always be willing to meet new people in my life who’ll help me overcome my many hardships.” Garnet smiled.

“Most kind words Your Majesty, I’m simply just another face in the palace.” The maid gently chuckled as Garnet joined in.

“Oh Allison please... you’ve been more than a maid to me.” Garnet smiled.

“I appreciate the kind words, it has been a pleasure being at your side. I hope someday I may repay the favor for you someday from all your kindness.” Allison said.

Garnet nodded.

“I would love to someday introduce him to you.”

“I would be most honored Your Majesty.”

*“Friends... they come in many forms, blossoming like a flower in the fields alongside many. I met many of them along my travels... thanks to him.*

*Sometimes I forget that when they come to visit, they are here for me, they are helping me overcome his absence. I musn't let myself forget that everyone who knows of his story believe that he is still out there, finding his way back. It's a large world out there, we fought through many battles together, we stood by each other together, through the many hardships and reality that challenged us to face unfathomed darkness that unfolded onto our world.*

*Yet... the world can also help us overcome these hardships in ways one must read between the lines, no matter what. To see the world for what it truly is, it's very fascinating how much one can change by the actions of the few who make an impact in your*

*life. Being the guiding light that sets you on the path of destiny, whether it be the stars above or kind heart of a person whose selflessly is willing to do whatever it takes to help you overcome.*

*I know Zidane is out there...*

*He will someday come back...*

*Yet... if it doesn't...*

*His memories will forever last in my heart, being told to the people around me, where his existence will never fade away, as they tell my story of him, to those around us.*

*I will await for that day to come.*

*Where we will be together again.*

*Under a river of stars above that dances the night away."*

*The End*

A/N: This short story was written based on a challenge from a fellow FF9 fanfic writer and I'm happy with how well this came out. Happy to have written it!

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